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## **A Cosmopolitan Imagination: Reimagining National Identity through Art**

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In this presentation, we examine the potentiality of the arts for reflecting upon and provoking complex understandings of contemporary national identity and we explore a set of cosmopolitan practices and positions that enhance the quality of teaching and learning in various educational settings. As part of a three-year study entitled, *O Canada! Reimagining Canadian Identity: A Cosmopolitan Approach to Teaching and Learning*, we draw from arts based engagements in an artist-in-residence program, investigating how art creates a space for exploring and strengthening identification with place.

Cosmopolitanism or cosmopolitan studies (Pinar 2009) have become a growing research area concerned with ways of imagining a world that emphasizes inclusivity. In this sense, being cosmopolitan requires individuals to embrace hybridity, appreciate diversity, and engage with otherness (Appiah, 2006; Delanty, 2009; Pinar, 2009). Approaching cosmopolitanism in light of a larger framework of analysis, we consider artist-in-residences as sites where artists, students, teachers, and researchers may experience “moments of openness” (Delanty, 2009, p. 53), enacting cultural and social transformation.

We provide an overview of select arts based engagements within the artist-in-residence program and we discuss how they serve as artistic-intellectual platforms contributing to a critical dialogue between ethical responsibility, locational identity and a cosmopolitan imagination. We conclude by provoking a dialogue about artistic and pedagogical sites that enact social vision and action with the goal of identifying strategies for promoting cosmopolitan conceptions of difference.